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Reprinted from the Annual Report of the American Historical Association
for 1913, Volume I, pages 111-125



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P9M3



10.12.13. 3 Aug. 91.

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UNDER THE ROMAN REPUBLIC.

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That the expansion of the Roman Republic was somewhat irregular and haphazard, that its provinces were acquired piecemeal, one here, one there, has long been recognized. That the senate was, upon the whole, opposed to expansion has likewise been recognized, and the motive attributed to the senate has usually been the independence of the governors and the difficulty of controlling them. Yet there are some features of the story which this motive would hardly seem to explain and which, perhaps, have been too little noticed.

The first of these is the intermittent character of Roman expansion. In a relatively short space of time Rome annexed several provinces, and then for a number of years no additions were made to her empire. A brief table will, perhaps, make this clearer. From 241 B. C. to 197 B. C., during a period of 44 years, Rome annexed x four provinces. Then from 197 B. C. to 146 B. C., during a period of 51 years, no new territories were acquired. From 146 B. C. to 121 B. C., during a period of 25 years, four more provinces were annexed. Then from 121 B. C. to 63 B. C., during a period of 58 years, we find no further acquisitions. Thus the dominions of Rome advanced rapidly for 44 years, then stood still for 51 years, then advanced again for 25 years, then remained stationary for 58 years.

The second peculiarity is that in the periods of rest, if they may be so described, the republic not only did not annex new provinces but strove earnestly to avoid it. It is not that opportunities were lacking, but that Rome refused to take advantage of them. One or two illustrations will suffice to make this clear. As was said above, in the 51 years between 197 B. C. and 146 B. C., Rome acquired no new territory. Yet in this time Rome carried on several important wars. From 200 B. C. to 196 B. C., Rome was engaged in the second Macedonian War. The result of that war was to place Greece and Macedon at her feet. Yet Rome contented herself with curtailing the power of Macedon and withdrew. Hardly had Rome withdrawn when in 192 B. C. Antiochus of Syria landed in Greece and Rome

was forced into a war with him. The result of that war, which ended with the battle of Magnesia in 190 B. C., was to leave Rome mistress of Greece and Asia Minor. She gave up her conquests, annexed no territory, and withdrew her forces. In 171 B. C. Perseus, king of Macedon, began a war of revenge on Rome. He was crushed at the battle of Pydna in 168 B. C., and Macedon lay helpless. Instead of annexing Macedon, which had so far caused her no less than three wars, Rome abolished the Macedonian monarchy, divided the country into four republics, and went home. Nineteen years after Pydna, the Macedonians revolted under a pretender in 149 B. C. Then at length Rome yielded to the inevitable, and, as there was simply no other way of keeping Macedon quiet, she annexed it as a province at the beginning of the second period of expansion.

Another instance of this same aversion to conquest is furnished by the province of Narbonensis. After Rome had acquired possessions in Spain it was, as has been pointed out very often, inevitable that she should seek to get a land connection between Spain and Italy. In ancient times the Mediterranean could only be navigated with safety at certain seasons, and it would thus be unwise in Rome to rely wholly on communications by sea with her provinces in Spain. All historians have felt the force of these considerations. What has not been explained is why Rome remained blind to them for 76 years. Perhaps we may attribute it in part to the policy of no expansion which prevailed from 197 B. C. to 146 B. C. Once she resumed her forward policy, the province of Narbonensis was annexed and land communications with Spain assured.

One more instance of Roman anti-imperialism. In the second period of stagnation—from an imperial standpoint—Rome received a bequest of Egypt. The last legitimate Ptolemy in his will bequeathed his kingdom to Rome. The senate promptly declined it. Mommsen has attempted to explain this attitude of the senate.

Egypt [he says], by its peculiar position and its financial organization, placed in the hands of any governor commanding it a pecuniary and naval power, and generally an independent authority, which were absolutely incompatible with the suspicious and feeble government of the oligarchy: in this point of view it was judicious to forego the direct possession of the country of the Nile.¹

Amplified and adapted to the special circumstances of each case, the reason given by Mommsen has been generally followed in explaining the reluctance of the senate to annex new provinces. Jealousy of the governor is the reason generally assigned,² yet this can

¹ Mommsen, "History of Rome," IV, 319.

² Thus Mr. Heitland, the latest historian of the Roman Republic, says: "That the senate was anything but eager to annex provinces is clear enough, and was no doubt mainly due to the known difficulty of controlling distant governors." Though he also points out some other considerations, such as the influence of the "old Roman" party and the wealth or poverty of the province, he seems to regard the reason given above as the chief cause of the senate's attitude. "The Roman Republic," II, 187-188.

hardly be the whole explanation, since this motive would be likely to be as strongly felt at one time as another, while the reluctance of the senate to make new annexations is plainly much stronger at some periods than at others. Why, in other words, should the senate be more reluctant to annex territory before 146 B. C. than after that year?

If we turn, however, to the constitutional problem which the government of provinces presented to the Romans, an explanation is readily forthcoming. Previous to 146 B. C. the problem presented difficulties which it did not present after that year. And this explanation will apply equally at another point. The growth of Rome stopped in 121 B. C., but it so happens that the problem had again and in that year become difficult. It would seem, therefore, that this phase of Roman imperial development—namely, the constitutional problem presented by the government of the provinces—is worthy of a more careful consideration than it seems to have received.

In this study I wish to concentrate attention wholly on the constitutional aspects of the problem, but without meaning in any way to deny that many other causes entered in in each particular case. It will be noted also that the motives here attributed to the senate are precisely of the sort that would not be brought forward openly in debate; hence the silence as to these motives of the ancient writers will, perhaps, not seem unduly strange.

The key to the senate's motives may, perhaps, be found in its composition and in its position in the Roman state. From early times the duty of making out the list of senators was intrusted to the censor. Soon, however, his freedom of choice began to be much restricted in practice. Certain persons, especially the ex-magistrates, were felt to have a moral if not a legal right to be placed upon the roll. This had come to be the case as early as 216 B. C., at least, for it is clear from the account which Livy gives us of the filling up of the senate after the battle of Cannæ that there was a well-understood order which the censor was expected to follow in filling vacancies in the senate. In the first place, all ex-consuls, all ex-prætors, and all ex-curule ædiles were entitled to a seat. In the second place, all ex-ædiles of the plebs, all ex-tribunes, and all ex-quæstors. In the third place only, citizens who had distinguished themselves in war but had not held office. In ordinary times such a rule must have left the censor but a slight liberty of choice, and, moreover, that range of choice must have been diminished with every increase in the number of the magistrates. A time would therefore come when any further increase in the number of the magistrates would, *if these rules of precedence were allowed to stand*, necessitate an increase in the size of the senate.

With a government so constituted how did the problem of governing the provinces present itself and what solution was found? The first provinces of the Roman people were Sardinia and Sicily, taken for the purpose of keeping Carthage at a safe distance from Italy. Having annexed them, Rome was obliged to provide in some fashion for their government. A brief experience sufficed to convince the Romans that the tranquillity and safety of these provinces required the presence in them of a Roman governor armed with the *imperium*; that is, a Roman magistrate. But all the magistrates were then fully occupied at Rome. The obvious course to follow under these circumstances was to increase the number of magistrates with *imperium* and send the new magistrates to the provinces. As it was out of the question to increase the number of consuls, the prætors were chosen and the number increased from two to four. At the same time, as it was customary for a magistrate holding an independent command to be accompanied by a quæstor, the number of quæstors was increased to meet the new needs.

This successfully solved the difficulty for the time being, and when, at the close of the Second Punic War, Rome acquired two new provinces in Spain, she resorted to the same method to secure governors. The number of prætors was now raised to 6 and that of the quæstors to 12. In the 51 years that followed Rome strove earnestly to avoid any new annexations. The reason would seem to be that it was impossible to provide governors for any new provinces by the method so far followed, and this for the reason that *the number of magistrates did not admit of further increase*. This was due to the hard and fast system which the republic had gradually built up. This system required, in the first place, that the candidates for the prætorship should have held the quæstorship and that the quæstorship should confer a seat in the senate. There were now 6 prætors and 12 quæstors elected each year. If the number of the prætors was increased without increasing the number of quæstors two inconveniencies followed: first, the new prætors could not be accompanied by quæstors as custom required, and secondly, the freedom of the people in election was materially curtailed. If, on the other hand, the number of the quæstors was increased, then it followed that, either the number of the senate must be increased, or the rule giving the quæstor a seat in the senate must be set aside. Thus to carry the existing system further in any direction required an extensive readjustment of the constitutional machinery, and there was no one of sufficient width of vision and sufficient power to carry through such an adjustment against the outcry of those who would be adversely affected and against the strongly conservative instincts of the Roman people.

That the number of magistrates was now sufficient to fill the senate may be easily made clear. The number of quæstors was at this time 12 and the traditional number of the senate 300. Sulla, when he reorganized the Roman constitution, decided to increase the size of the senate from 300 to 500,¹ and to accomplish this he raised the number of the quæstors to 20. Now by a very simple arithmetical computation, if 20 quæstors would give a senate of 500, 12 quæstors would give one of 300 members. We have, therefore, good grounds for believing that the number of magistrates did not admit of increase under the existing system.

But why should not the existing system be changed? Either of two changes would have met the situation. On the one hand, the close association between the magistracy and the senate might be broken, or, on the other, the size of the senate might be increased. Neither change was in fact feasible, or, at least, neither could be made by anyone but a man of blood and iron, clothed with resistless power like Sulla, and, like him, prepared to ride roughshod over all opposition. It may be well to consider briefly the nature of the obstacles to change.

The chief difficulty sprang from the fact that the Roman government was no longer what it pretended to be. In law Rome was a democracy and had been one from the time when the plebeians had been accorded equal rights with the patricians. In fact, however, hardly had the patrician aristocracy been overthrown than a new patricio-plebeian aristocracy began to develop. This new nobility was composed of those families members of which had held curule office under the republic. The development was of course gradual, but already, in 217 B. C., Livy tells us that a tribune bitterly denounced the plebeian nobles and asserted that they began to look down upon the plebeians from the moment that they ceased to be despised by the patricians, and clamored for the election of a real plebeian consul, a new man; that is, one belonging to a family that had not before held office.

We may, then, reasonably infer that the nobility was by this time a clearly marked class. If so, they would naturally view any change in the constitution from the standpoint of their own interests. Now, either of the changes suggested would have been injurious to the nobility.

Since nobility was acquired by the holding of a magistracy, there would of necessity be a sufficient number of families already noble to hold the offices and fill the senate. Their obvious interest would consist in not allowing the number to become very much greater,

¹ This seems, at any rate, to have been the result of his reforms. See Willems, "*Le Sénat de la République Romaine*," I, 405, and his reconstructions of the senate of the earlier period.

and such was consistently their policy. Now, any attempt to increase the size of the senate was sure to encounter the bitter opposition of the nobles. An aristocracy tends always to exclusiveness, and an increase in the size of the senate meant neither more nor less than an extensive creation of new peers. Twice in English history the House of Lords has stooped to bitter humiliation solely in order to avert such an event. But the Roman nobility itself controlled the size of the senate, and therefore no increase in the size of that body was in the least feasible.

There remained the other alternative, namely, that of breaking the close connection between officeholding and a seat in the senate. The simplest plan in this direction would have been to provide for the election of special governors for the provinces and to provide that the holding of these offices should not confer a title to a seat. But this plan was likewise open to serious objection from the standpoint of the senate and the nobility, which used it as an organ of government.

In the first place, a large part of the power and influence of the senate sprang precisely from the fact that it concentrated in itself the whole official experience of the Roman world. Consuls and praetors must inevitably treat with respect the deliberate judgment of a body in which sat every Roman who had ever led an army or governed a province. Once let official knowledge accumulate outside the senate and much of the senate's influence was gone. This was a consideration absolutely vital to a body which, like the senate, ruled rather by influence than by legal right.

Indirectly, too, such a proposal would be injurious to the nobles. In Roman minds there was the closest association between the magistracies, the senate, and the nobility. A seat in the senate was one of the essential badges of the noble. Once create important magistracies which did not confer a seat there and you must raise up a new order to rival the existing nobles, and such a proposition was little likely to find favor at their hands.

Still again, a considerable part of the senate's control over the provincial governors lay in the fact that they were *ipso facto* senators, and the opinions of their order, spoken through that body of which they were themselves a part, could not but weigh heavily with them. Break this connection, let the people name governors who have no direct personal interest in the supremacy of the senate, and you strike a direct blow at its power. Since already the senate found its control, great as it was, over the provinces too weak, it would scarcely have consented to a change that would have weakened it still more.

One possibility, indeed, remained. If the connection between the lower and the higher magistracies was severed, the number of the

prætors could be increased. This could be done by making two changes—first, by ceasing to require the quæstorship to be held before the prætorship and by decreeing that the quæstorship should no longer confer a seat in the senate. But such a change would meet with little favor from the nobility. It would conflict with the conservative instincts of the Romans and with many private interests. As an example of these private interests the *ordo quaestorius* in the senate would be strongly opposed, and the *ordo prætorius* could hardly wish their numbers to be enlarged.

But larger difficulties arose. One can scarcely fail to wonder at the ease with which the nobility were able to keep their monopoly of the offices. Why was it so rarely that “new men” could force their way into their ranks? It seems difficult not to suspect that the peculiar character of the office of quæstor worked silently in their favor. How this might be the case may easily be seen. The quæstorship was the first office to be held in an official career. Hence it was held early. Ordinarily it could be held at the age of 28. Thus a quæstor would usually be from 28 to 30. Now at the age of 30 it would very rarely happen that a man had had an opportunity to do anything to attract general attention or make a mark for himself by his own personality. If, therefore, two relatively unknown men were candidates for the office, and one of them bore a well-known name, that one would be nearly sure of being chosen. Hence it would easily happen that the nobles could secure it for the younger members of their families. If, now, it were made a necessary preliminary to the higher offices, it would clearly throw them into the hands of the nobles. Looking at it from this point of view, we can readily understand why no proposal should have been made to change the rules that worked so well in favor of the dominant aristocracy.

Hence, from whatever side the problem of providing more governors for new provinces might be approached, it was nearly impossible of solution in a sense agreeable to the senate. Is it, therefore, surprising that the senate took the stand that there should be no new provinces to provide for, and that it directed the whole foreign policy of Rome with that end in view? In other words, the senate permitted the rapid expansion of the Roman Empire as long as the existing system could be expanded to meet the urgent needs of government. When that point was reached and when any new annexations required extensive readjustments, the senate called a halt.

Yet, although the expansion of Rome could be, and was, stopped during some 50 years, the existing system could not be made permanent. On the one hand, new annexations could not be forever avoided, and on the other, the system broke down from within.

The growth of judicial business at Rome ended by demanding the retention there of more than two prætors, especially after the estab-

lishment of the standing court *de Repetundis* in 148 B. C., and the senate's Macedonian policy having ended in an utter fiasco, that unhappy country was finally annexed at the same time that the destruction of Carthage placed Africa in the hands of the Romans. Thus the number of the provinces was increased to six, while but three prætors were available as governors.

Faced by this situation, the senate threw the whole system of governing by prætors overboard and worked out a new plan. This was rendered possible by a new and most significant development in the Roman constitution, namely, the rise of the promagistracy.

The origin of the promagistracy was simple. In the early days of the republic, when the number of magistrates with *imperium* was very restricted, the state occasionally needed a larger number than there were. The right to prolong the *imperium* of a magistrate was originally exercised by the people, but during the period of the Great Wars the senate usurped it, as it usurped so many other powers of government.

The convenience of this power for the senate in arranging for the government of the provinces was from the first great. Indeed, without it the government could scarcely have been carried on. The Roman state was equipped with only eight magistrates with *imperium*—the two consuls and six prætors. Normally two prætors were kept in Rome and four sent to the four provinces then existing. But it sometimes happened that a magistrate with *imperium* was imperatively needed somewhere else. In this case the senate dispatched one of the prætors and to replace him left one of the provincial governors in office for a second year as a proprætor. This usage was the more easily established, as it was a regular rule of the constitution that a governor continued in office till his successor arrived to take over the government. Now, as each year the senate settled what provinces should be distributed by lot among the prætors, therefore, if they failed to designate one of the four regular provinces for this purpose, the prætor there in charge could not be superseded for another year.

Thus the power which the senate had assumed of continuing in office at its discretion a consul or a prætor beyond his regular term supplied the element of elasticity required to make the rigid system workable. Since it was clearly a necessity, no serious objection seems to have been made to this assumption of power on the senate's part. Once established as a legitimate part of the machinery of government to meet exceptional emergencies it came to be employed with increasing frequency. The more the steadily growing needs of the Roman state pressed upon the heavily burdened regular magistrates, the greater the temptation to relieve the pressure by the intervention of the promagistrates.

Thus, by the year 146 B. C. the promagistrate had come to be a frequent visitor in the Roman government. But up to that year he had always remained a visitor. That is, the use of a proconsul or proprætor was always looked upon as something exceptional—a temporary expedient to meet an unusual situation. In 146 B. C. the senate solved the problem of governing the increased number of provinces by turning the exception into the rule. Henceforth the promagistrate, instead of being a special office intended to meet an emergency, was a regular part of the ordinary constitution, and the provinces were governed not by magistrates but by promagistrates.

This new method of administering the provinces had from some standpoints little to commend it. So far as the efficiency of the government was concerned, it was unqualifiedly bad. It made directly and powerfully for poor administration, and this for the simplest of reasons. If a man is elected to fill an office he can be chosen with some reference to fitness. But if a man is elected to one office and then when his term is over he is sent to fill some quite different office this becomes impossible. Every year the Roman people elected prætors to serve as judges in Rome; when their year of judicial service there was over the senate shipped them off to govern provinces and command armies. They were necessarily chosen without the smallest reference to their qualifications for these new duties. Of course, some of them, like Julius Cæsar, were men of so versatile a genius that they could do almost anything and do it well; but such men were rare, and it necessarily happened that the majority were ill-adapted to their posts. As a result the provincial administration suffered and Rome suffered in consequence.

Yet, whatever the demerits of the system from the standpoint of political science, from the standpoint of the nobles it had signal merits. It solved all the problems of administration and solved them in a way entirely agreeable to the senate. Its advantages may be summed up as four. It enabled the senate to relieve the congestion of business at Rome by keeping all six prætors there during their year of office. At the same time it furnished enough governors to meet the increased demands, as all six, together with the two retiring consuls, were available for provincial governorships. It did both these things without increasing the number of the magistrates, and hence the size of the senate, and, in the fourth place, it did so without disturbing any of the existing rules and regulations.

The year 146 B. C. may be taken, then, as marking the beginning of a new form of provincial administration. Henceforth the consuls and prætors were to serve their year of office in Italy, and, when that was over, were to go out for a second year as proconsuls and proprætors to govern the provinces. But the year is significant for another reason. It marks the beginning of a second period of ex-

pansion, and this, in part at least, because of the new system. If we have been justified in concluding that from 197 B. C. to 146 B. C. the senate was seriously opposed to annexing new provinces because it had no governors to put in charge, after 146 B. C. this reason ceased to apply. While, under the old system, the senate had at most only four prætors to send out as governors, under the new there were at least eight promagistrates available for service. As after 146 B. C. there were only six provinces the senate had no longer the same motive for resisting expansion. Yet the expansion, which was possible under the new arrangement, was distinctly limited. The new system would provide for the government of eight provinces, and there a halt must be called or the system would break down.

Yet the new limit of growth imposed by the number of available governors was not quite so rigid as in the case of the former system. The same power which extended the *imperium* of a magistrate for one year could as easily extend it again. If, therefore, some of the governors were allowed to serve for two years instead of one a number of provinces somewhat in excess of eight could be provided for. Yet such an extension must have appeared, from the senate's standpoint, dangerous. Two years' service in a province might give time for a bad governor to do serious mischief and for a good one to become dangerously strong. In a single year a governor could hardly inaugurate and carry far a policy contrary to the wishes of the senate, whereas in two he would be in a far more independent position and might irrevocably commit the state. Moreover, it tended directly to making the governor less responsible for his actions. It was an established principle of the republican constitution that a magistrate could not be called to answer for his conduct while he remained in office. It was, therefore, a sound constitutional principle which insisted upon an interval between offices so that the magistrate should become again a private citizen and as such liable to prosecution for any illegal acts. To secure this, the rule had been established that two years must elapse before a man who had held one office was eligible for another. If he were allowed to spend both years as the governor of a province, this rule might be practically annulled. If his governorship, however, was limited to one year, the purpose of the rule would still be attained, as there would still remain one year which must be spent in private life.

It results from this that, while the senate might have no grave objection to an increase in the number of the provinces to eight, it would not be willing to see the number increase much beyond that point. This, indeed, seems to have been its actual policy. Though not exactly imperialistic, it offered little opposition to expansion between the year 146 B. C. and 121 B. C. During these years besides the two provinces of Macedon and Africa, annexed at its beginning,

two other provinces, Asia and Narbonensis, were acquired. At this point the limit of the new system had been reached, and we find the senate once more strongly opposed to expansion. That body had offered little opposition when Asia was annexed under the will of Attalus of Pergamum, but it promptly rejected Egypt offered them by the will of Ptolemy Alexander. For the 58 years following the annexation of Narbonensis the growth of the empire was practically arrested. Indeed, if the existing system was to be maintained, the senate had little choice. It had at its disposal only eight governors. Yet situations continually arose to call for one or more of these in places that did not normally require a resident governor. When this happened some of the governors had to be given a second year in their provinces, and if this practice were once allowed to spread and to become the regular usage of the constitution, serious consequences might follow. In fact, the number of the provinces already amounted to ten. Neither Cisalpine Gaul nor Cilicia seem to have been regarded at first as among the regular provinces, yet they ended by making themselves such. A word concerning them may not be out of place.

The conquest of Cisalpine Gaul was a long and gradual process. It was begun as far back as 200 B. C. But the Gauls offered a prolonged though somewhat intermittent resistance. The surviving books of Livy furnish fairly complete information as to the regular annual assignments of provinces from 198 to 167 B. C. The regular method at that time of governing a province was by a prætor, yet during these 31 years prætors were sent to Gaul only five times, with 3 years for which Livy gives us no information. On seven occasions consuls were dispatched to Gaul, so that in all there were not more than 12 or 15 years during which a regular magistrate was stationed in the province. The inference from this would seem to be clear. When Gaul was quiet it was not thought to require a special governor, and when it was turbulent a prætor or a consul was sent to deal with it. This was probably rendered easier by the troubles in Liguria, which called for the presence in the north of Italy of one or both the consuls with a good deal of regularity. If there was a consul in Liguria, he could doubtless keep an eye on the Po Valley and see that all went well. This was the case in at least eight years where no magistrate was sent to Gaul itself.

Thus we may reasonably doubt whether the senate viewed the Cisalpine province as a regular charge upon its supply of governors. This seems the more reasonable as the Romans planted numerous colonies in the Po Valley, something not done in any of the other provinces. We may, perhaps, conclude that for a long time the senate did not regard Cisalpine Gaul as requiring the regular presence of a governor. Gradually the irregular presence of one became

so frequent as to be regular, and a ninth province had usually to be provided for.

The province of Cilicia was in a somewhat similar case. In 103 B. C. the Romans established a military post in this region. We may well doubt if they had at that time any idea of acquiring a province, since the territory was very restricted in extent. Yet here, too, it gradually became evident that the conditions were such as made the presence of a governor necessary during the greater part of the time.

If Cisalpine Gaul and Cilicia were made part of the regular provinces, the limits of the promagistracy were already exceeded. This was remedied for the senate by Sulla, who, during his dictatorship, increased the number of prætors to eight, thus making the number of promagistrates each year available balance the number of Provinces. This policy of increasing the number of the magistrates was possible to Sulla since, in the first place, he was clothed with irresistible power, and, in the second, because, disregarding the feelings of the nobility, he created peers wholesale by increasing the number of the senate.

In spite of Sulla's masterful recasting of the republican system the same considerations continued to apply. The whole policy of the senate, as he reorganized it, was antiexpansionist. The underlying motives of the senate were doubtless still the same. There were no governors available to send out to new provinces, and hence the senate was resolved not to assume new burdens. Yet in spite of senate and nobility new responsibilities arose and could not be evaded. Since the senate would not meet them, the people intervened. Their method of solution was by intrusting sweeping powers to popular favorites. For this the incompetent administration, which was the necessary fruit of the existing system, furnished not only the excuse but the provocation. With the fall of the reactionary régime of Sulla, and even from his death, we enter on the period of great commands, extending over several provinces and intrusted for a term of years to the great leaders of the day. This system ended, and could end, only in the empire, but with that development we need not here concern ourselves.

What it has been the aim of this study to point out is the close connection between the constitutional problem raised by the necessity of providing governors for the provinces and the foreign policy of the republic. We have seen that the difficulty was first met by increasing the number of the magistrates invested with the *imperium*. As long as this method could be followed the Roman state expanded, but when any further increase tended to break up the republican constitution as it then was, there came a pause. Then, for a time, the senate successfully opposed all further expansion, until at length

such expansion could no longer be resisted. By that time, however, the promagistrate had become so far familiar to the Roman mind that the use of the promagistracy as a regular part of the machinery of government was possible. This device of substituting the promagistrate for the magistrate made possible another period of expansion, and when this, too, had been carried to the limit the senate again sought by all means to avoid a forward policy. When, however, a new policy of imperialism was forced upon the state the constitutional problem could be met only by means fatal, in no long time, to the existence of the republic. So long as the crude and complicated municipal institutions of Rome could, in some sort, be adjusted to meet the crying needs of the day the republic could continue; when such adjustment had become impossible, or, at any rate, too difficult for the statesmen of the time, then, in spite of the protests of idealists and the daggers of patriots, it had to cease and another system took its place.

The irony of the situation lay in the fact that the machine had become inadequate to the needs of the empire that it was forced to govern. After the conquests of Pompey in the East and of Caesar in Gaul there were at least 14 provinces to be provided for and only 10 promagistrates. Yet any attempt to increase the number of governors available must necessitate an extensive readjustment of the whole machine of government. To any such readjustment the nobility were bitterly opposed. From this it followed that the republic, if saved at all, would have to be saved in despite of the opposition of the republicans. For a time the senate might get around the difficulties of its position by virtue of the fact that the people had over its head intrusted several provinces to one governor; but this was a device which if persisted in was fatal, and yet there was no way back to a normal system except by the intervention of a second Sulla. But Caesar was not a Sulla and the machine stopped forever.



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